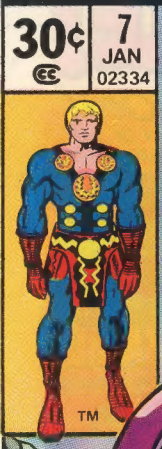
THE ETERNALS
MARVEL COMICS GROUP™
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
30¢ CC
7 JAN 02334

WHEN GODS WALK THE EARTH!

THE ETERNALS™



COME BACK! YOU CAN'T ESCAPE THE SPACE GOD!

WE THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY A LEGEND--

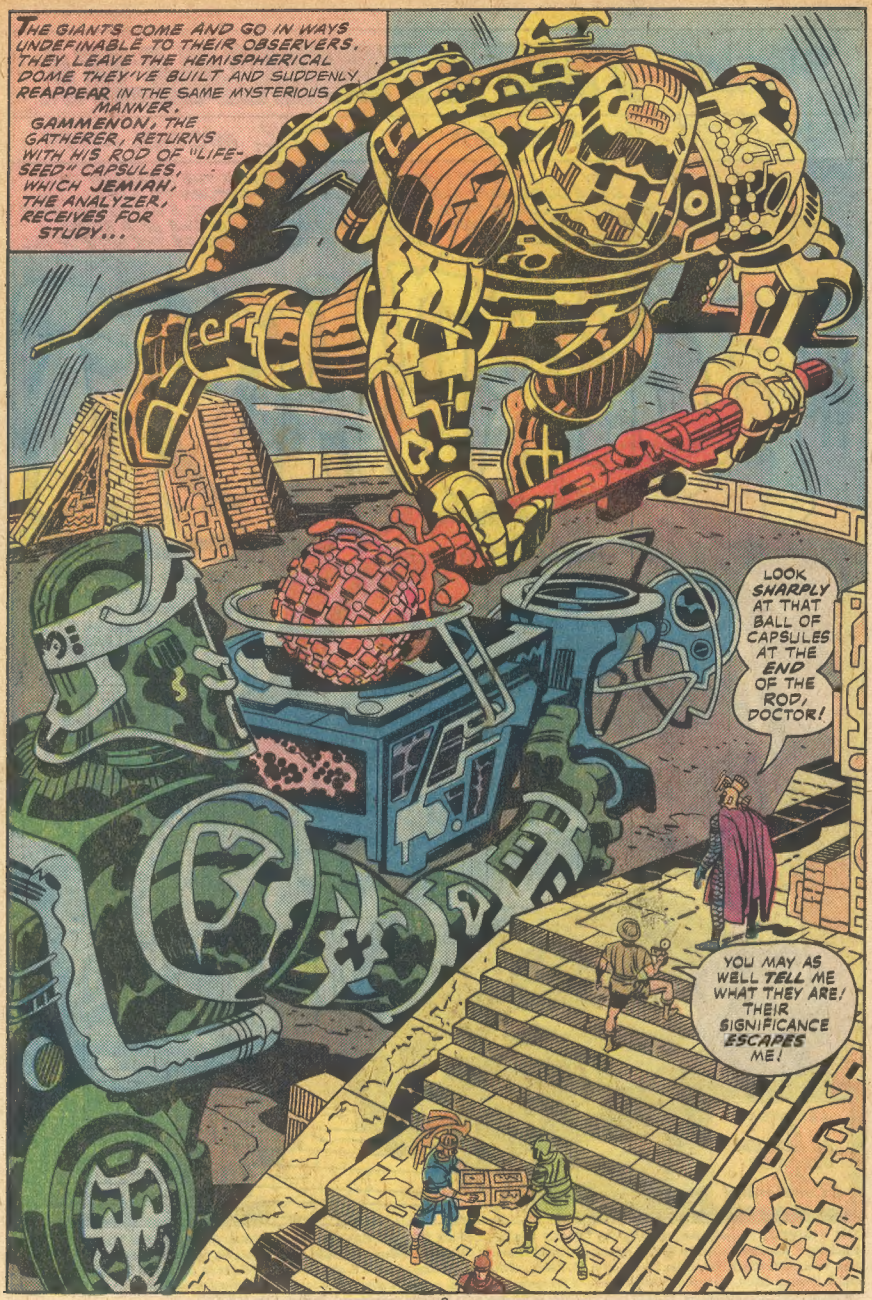
--B-BUT...THAT THING IS ALIVE! IT'S ALIVE!

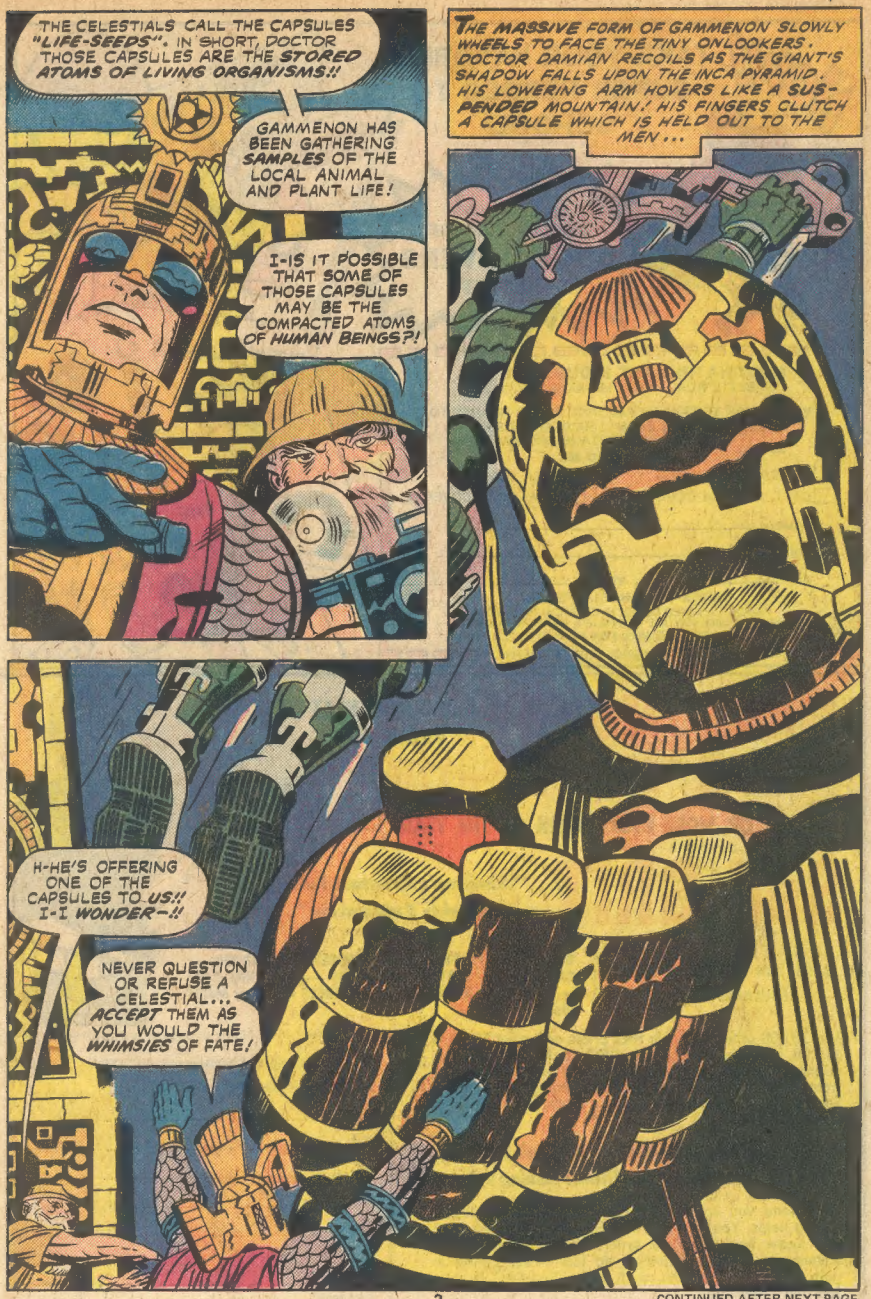
01
71486 02334
0

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **THE ETERNALS!**™

EDITED, WRITTEN AND DRAWN BY: JACK KIRBY • INKED AND ENJOYED BY: MICHAEL ROYER

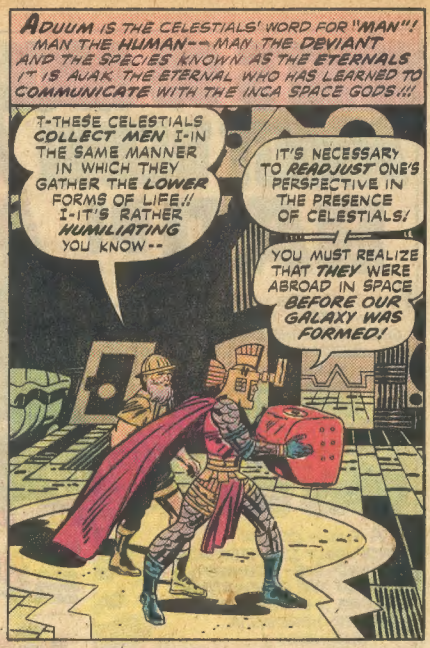
THE ETERNALS™ is published by MARVEL COMICS GROUP, OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 575 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022. Published monthly. Copyright ©1976 by Marvel Comics Group. A Division of Cadence Industries Corporation. All rights reserved 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. Vol. 1, No. 7, January, 1977 issue. Price 30¢ per copy in the U.S. and Canada. Subscription rate $4.00 for 12 issues. Canada, $5.00. Foreign, $6.00. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A.

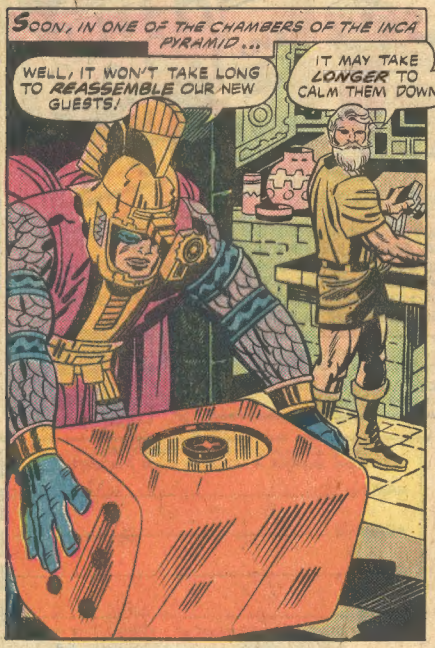

THE GIANTS COME AND GO IN WAYS UNDEFINABLE TO THEIR OBSERVERS. THEY LEAVE THE HEMISPHERICAL DOME THEY'VE BUILT AND SUDDENLY REAPPEAR IN THE SAME MYSTERIOUS MANNER. GAMMENON, THE GATHERER, RETURNS WITH HIS ROD OF "LIFE-SEED" CAPSULES, WHICH JEMIAH, THE ANALYZER, RECEIVES FOR STUDY...
LOOK SHARPLY AT THAT BALL OF CAPSULES AT THE END OF THE ROD, DOCTOR!
YOU MAY AS WELL TELL ME WHAT THEY ARE! THEIR SIGNIFICANCE ESCAPES ME!



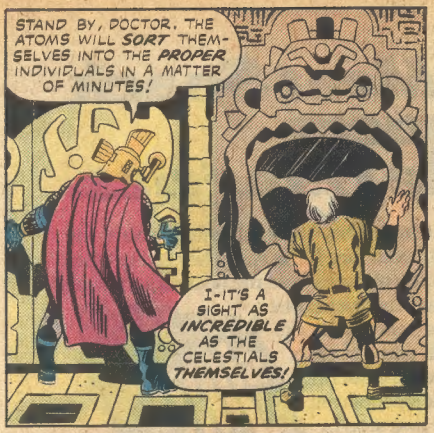
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

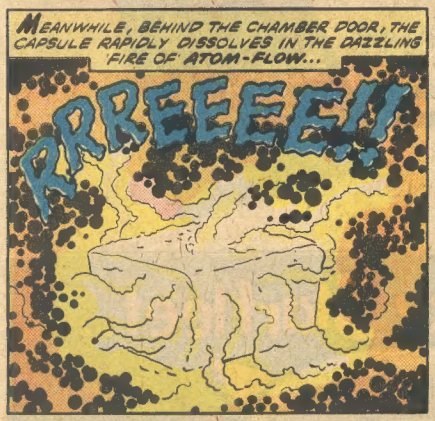
GAMMENON'S PALM OPENS AND RELEASES THE CAPSULE TO THE FAITHFUL LITTLE ADUUM, WHO KNOWS THAT IT CONTAINS THE ATOMS OF ITS KIND! THE INTELLIGENCE OF THE ADUUM ON THIS PLANET IS A NEVER-ENDING MARVEL...
I THANK YOU, GREAT CELESTIAL! IF IT IS YOUR WISH THAT I RECONSTRUCT THE ATOMS OF THESE MEN, THEN IT SHALL BE DONE
YOUR PURPOSE IS BENEVOLENT AND ABOVE QUESTION.
GOOD HEAVENS! YOU MEAN THAT THING CONTAINS-??

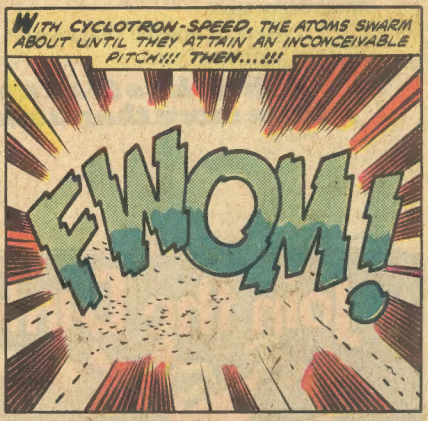

ADUUM IS THE CELESTIALS' WORD FOR "MAN"! MAN THE HUMAN--MAN THE DEVIANT AND THE SPECIES KNOWN AS THE ETERNALS I" IS AJAK THE ETERNAL WHO HAS LEARNED TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE INCA SPACE GODS!!!
T-THESE CELESTIALS COLLECT MEN I-IN THE SAME MANNER IN WHICH THEY GATHER THE LOWER FORMS OF LIFE!! I-IT'S RATHER HUMILIATING YOU KNOW--
IT'S NECESSARY TO READJUST ONE'S PERSPECTIVE IN THE PRESENCE OF CELESTIALS!
YOU MUST REALIZE THAT THEY WERE ABROAD IN SPACE BEFORE OUR GALAXY WAS FORMED!

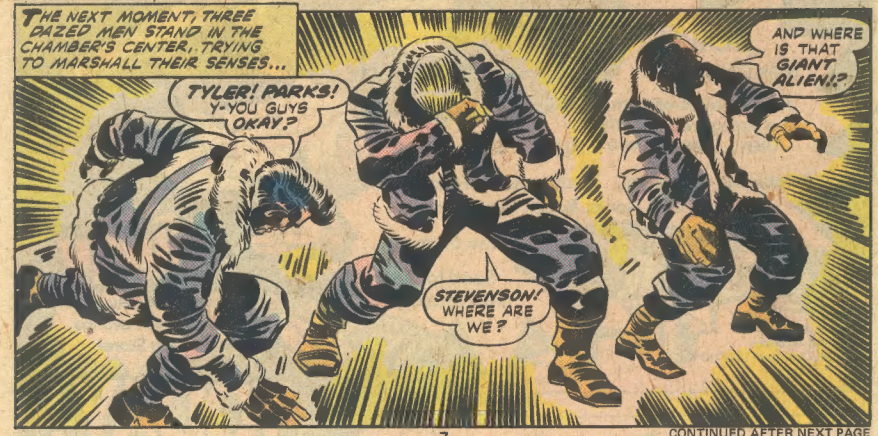

SOON, IN ONE OF THE CHAMBERS OF THE INCA PYRAMID...
WELL, IT WON'T TAKE LONG TO REASSEMBLE OUR NEW GUESTS!
IT MAY TAKE LONGER TO CALM THEM DOWN!

DEALING WITH HUMANS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A TOUCHY TASK, BUT AJAK DETERMINES TO TAKE IT IN STRIDE! HE PRESSES THE CAPSULE-ACTIVATOR AND THE ATOMIC REASSEMBLING PROCESS BEGINS...
PREEEEE!



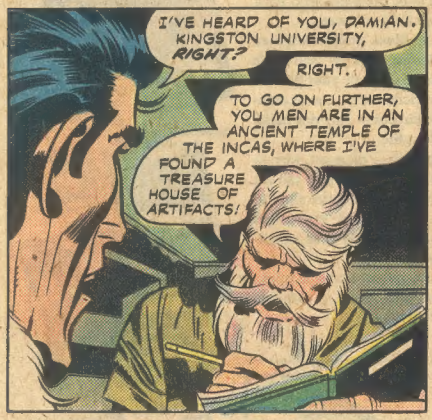


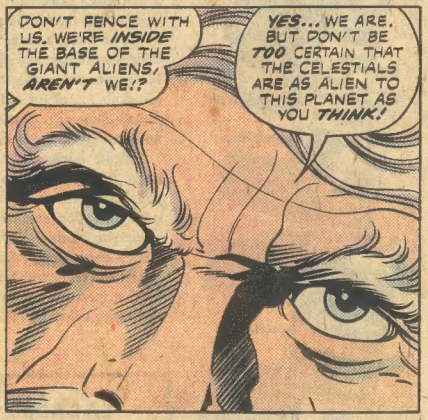




CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

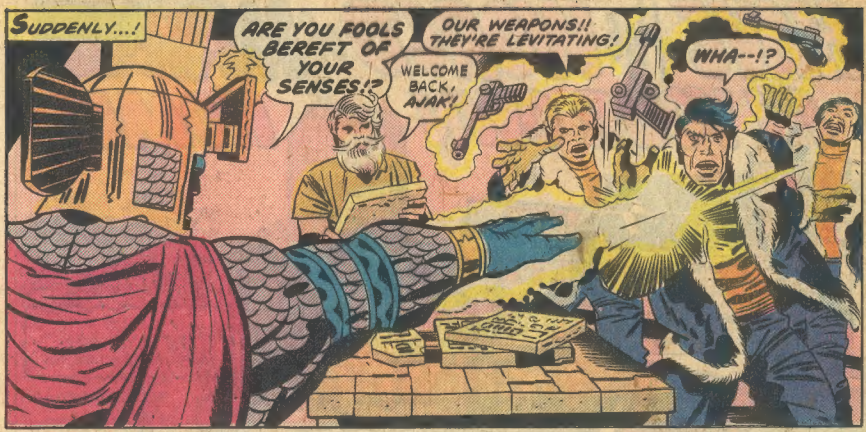
THE MEN OPEN THE CHAMBER DOOR AND FIND DOCTOR DAMIAN!
STEVENSON! LOOK!
A MAN! A PROFESSOR TYPE IF EVER I SAW ONE.
THERE'S NO SIGN OF THE GIANT!!
GENTLEMEN, GENTLEMEN! YOU MUST BE BURSTING WITH QUESTIONS... BUT FIRST, BE ASSURED THAT YOU'RE NOT IN ANY DANGER...
I'M DOCTOR DANIEL DAMIAN. I AM AN ARCHAEOLOGIST!

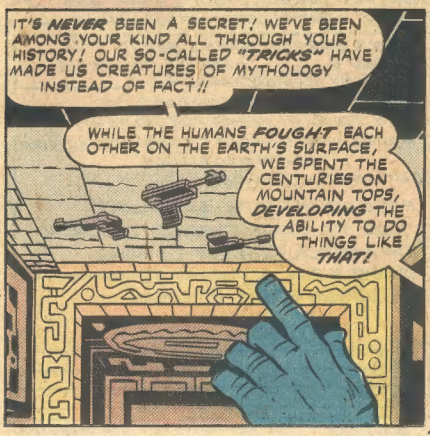

I'VE HEARD OF YOU, DAMIAN. KINGSTON UNIVERSITY, RIGHT?
RIGHT.
TO GO ON FURTHER, YOU MEN ARE IN AN ANCIENT TEMPLE OF THE INCAS, WHERE I'VE FOUND A TREASURE HOUSE OF ARTIFACTS!


DON'T FENCE WITH US. WE'RE INSIDE THE BASE OF THE GIANT ALIENS, AREN'T WE!?
YES... WE ARE. BUT DON'T BE TOO CERTAIN THAT THE CELESTIALS ARE AS ALIEN TO THIS PLANET AS YOU THINK!

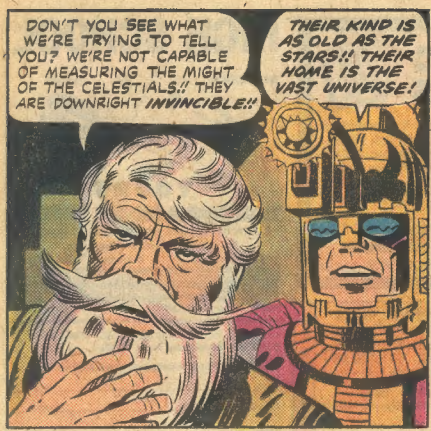
TELL US MORE, DOC! TELL US ALL YOU KNOW ABOUT THESE SPACE GIANTS!
THEN YOU'RE GOING TO SHOW US HOW TO LEAVE THIS PLACE WITH THE INFORMATION!
--UNDERSTAND, DOC?

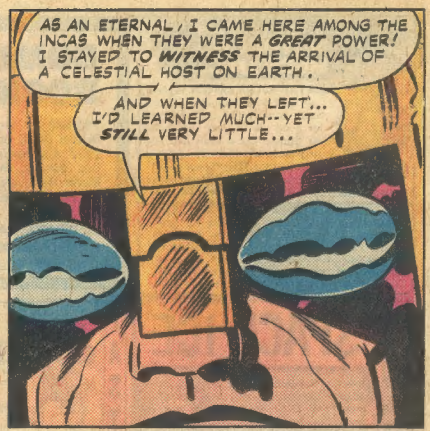
WE'RE SHIELD OPERATIVES... AND WHAT WE LEARN HERE IS VITAL TO SECURITY!
IT'S VERY SERIOUS BUSINESS, DOC!
OF COURSE IT'S SERIOUS BUSINESS! GOOD LORD, BUT IT'S SERIOUS!
BUT THAT PISTOL IS NOT YOUR TICKET OUT OF THIS PLACE!



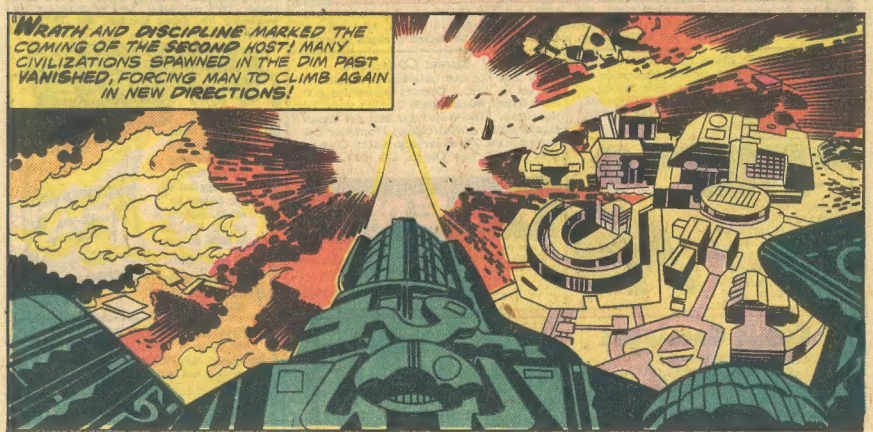


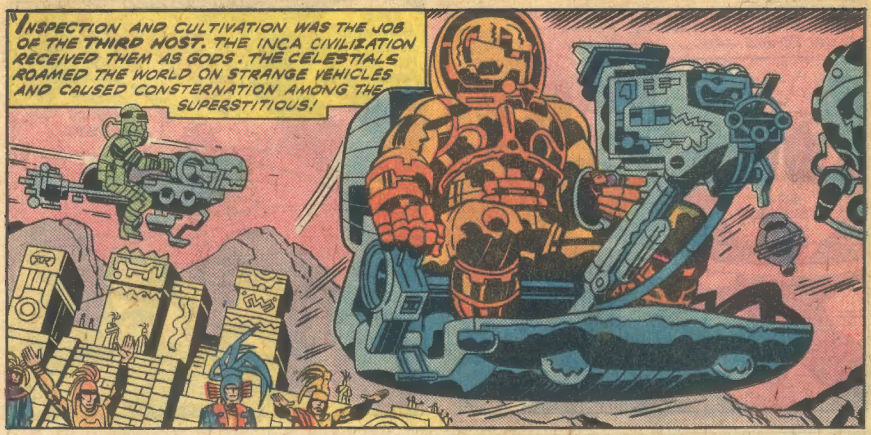
CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

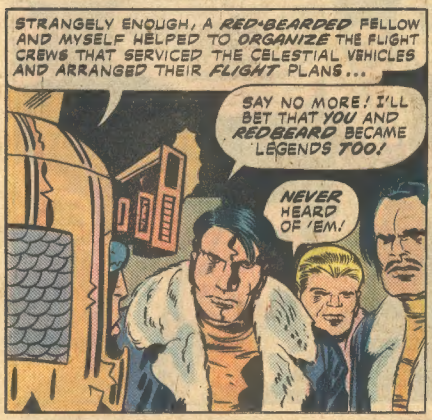

DON'T YOU SEE WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO TELL YOU? WE'RE NOT CAPABLE OF MEASURING THE MIGHT OF THE CELESTIALS!! THEY ARE DOWNRIGHT INVINCIBLE!!
THEIR KIND IS AS OLD AS THE STARS!! THEIR HOME IS THE VAST UNIVERSE!


AS AN ETERNAL, I CAME HERE AMONG THE INCAS WHEN THEY WERE A GREAT POWER! I STAYED TO WITNESS THE ARRIVAL OF A CELESTIAL HOST ON EARTH.
AND WHEN THEY LEFT... I'D LEARNED MUCH--YET STILL VERY LITTLE...

"THE CELESTIALS VISIT A PLANET IN FOUR HOSTS. THE FIRST CAME TO EARTH BEFORE THERE WERE MEN UPON IT... BUT THEY DID FIND OUR COMMON ANCESTOR, WHO BECAME SUBJECT TO THEIR EXPERIMENTS...


"WRATH AND DISCIPLINE MARKED THE COMING OF THE SECOND HOST! MANY CIVILIZATIONS SPAWNED IN THE DIM PAST VANISHED, FORCING MAN TO CLIMB AGAIN IN NEW DIRECTIONS!

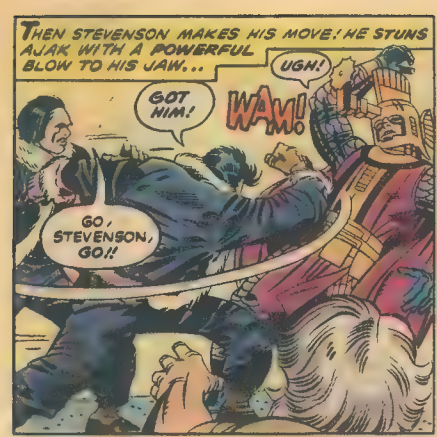

INSPECTION AND CULTIVATION WAS THE JOB OF THE THIRD HOST. THE INCA CIVILIZATION RECEIVED THEM AS GODS. THE CELESTIALS ROAMED THE WORLD ON STRANGE VEHICLES AND CAUSED CONSTERNATION AMONG THE SUPERSTITIOUS!

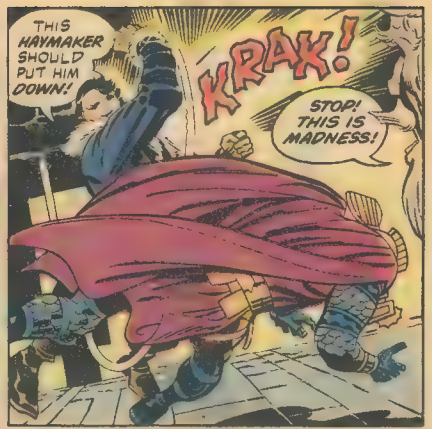

STRANGELY ENOUGH, A RED-BEARDED FELLOW AND MYSELF HELPED TO ORGANIZE THE FLIGHT CREWS THAT SERVICED THE CELESTIAL VEHICLES AND ARRANGED THEIR FLIGHT PLANS...
SAY NO MORE! I'LL BET THAT YOU AND REDBEARD BECAME LEGENDS TOO!
NEVER HEARD OF 'EM!

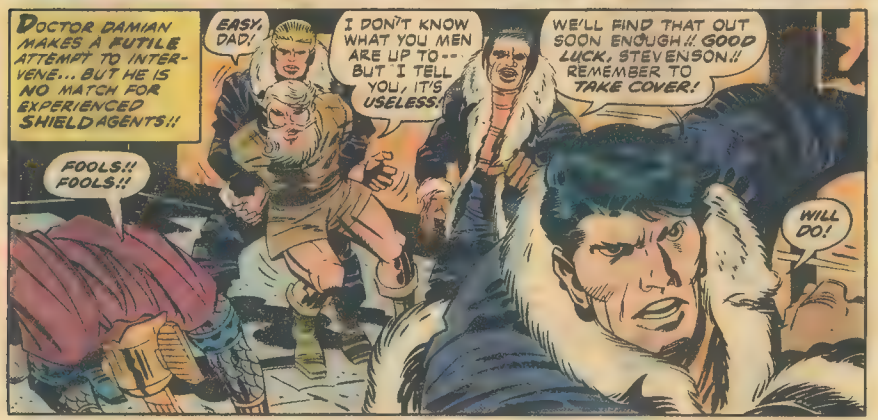
DOCTOR DAMIAN DOESN'T SHARE THAT VIEW! THE NAMES QUETZLECOATL AND TECUMOTZIN GOT HIM ALL WORKED UP!!
WHAT ARE YOUR NAMES?
I'M STEVENSON! THOSE TWO ARE TYLER AND PARKS!
HMPH!!

I MEANT FULL NAMES!
YOU'LL GET NO MORE THAN WHAT I GAVE YOU! THIS ISN'T A TEA PARTY!--AND WE DON'T PLAN ON STAYING LONG!!
THERE'S STILL AN ACE CARD TO BE PLAYED!!

STEVENSON'S LEFT HAND IS TIGHTLY CLENCHED AND HELD OUT OF SIGHT BEHIND HIS BACK! IF THERE IS AN ACE CARD, IT IS HIDDEN IN HIS FIST--AND READY TO BE USED!!

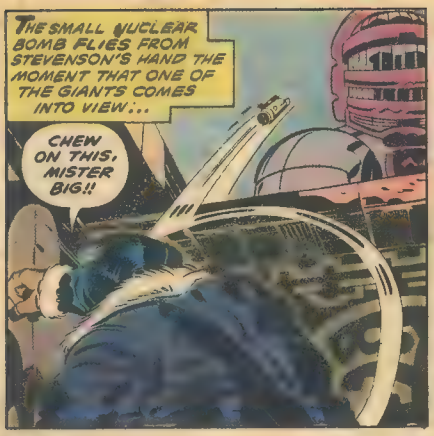

THEN STEVENSON MAKES HIS MOVE! HE STUNS AJAK WITH A POWERFUL BLOW TO HIS JAW...
UGH!
GOT HIM!
WAM!
GO, STEVENSON, GO!!

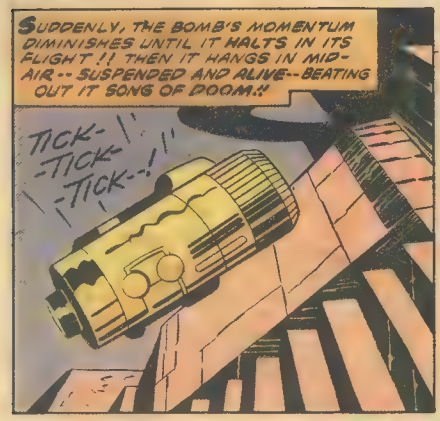

THIS HAYMAKER SHOULD PUT HIM DOWN!
KRAK!
STOP! THIS IS MADNESS!

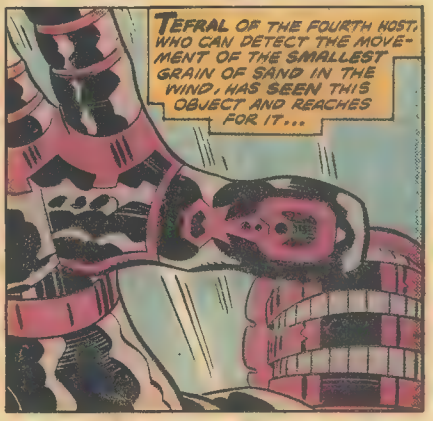

DOCTOR DAMIAN MAKES A FUTILE ATTEMPT TO INTERVENE... BUT HE IS NO MATCH FOR EXPERIENCED SHIELD AGENTS!!
EASY, DAD!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MEN ARE UP TO-- BUT I TELL YOU, IT'S USELESS!
WE'LL FIND THAT OUT SOON ENOUGH!! GOOD LUCK, STEVENSON!! REMEMBER TO TAKE COVER!
FOOLS!! FOOLS!!
WILL DO!

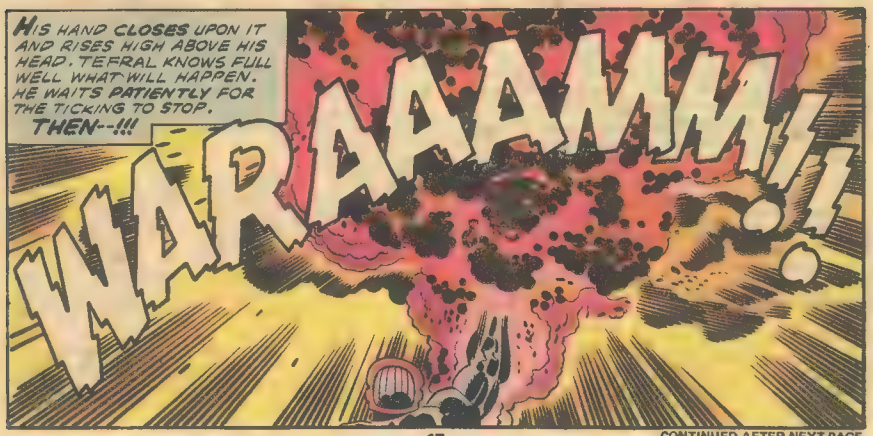
STEVENSON RACES UP THE STONE STEPS LEADING TO AN OPENING IN THE TEMPLE ROOF...
NOW WE'LL SEE WHAT THESE COCKAMAMIE LEGENDS ARE MADE OF!
SHIELD WANTS SOLID FACT, NOT OLD WIVES TALES!

GODS, DEVILS, OR SPACE GIANTS --THIS TACTICAL NUCLEAR DEVICE WILL DECIDE WHAT THEY ARE!
TICK-- TICK-TICK-- TICK--

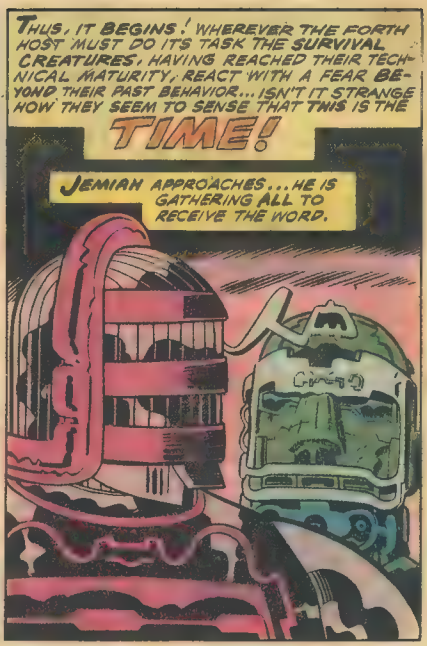








CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE



THE HOST ASSEMBLES AND STANDS OBEDIENTLY. THEIR BROTHERS ARE MANY AND STAND THUS ON A THOUSAND WORLDS WHERE THE SAME TASK MUST BE DONE. THE SEEDS OF AWARENESS ARE SOWN IN THE GALACTIC FIRMAMENT... THEY GROW WITH GREAT CLAMOR.

THEY REACH FOR THE STARS BUT THEY ARE FOREVER CUT DOWN BY THE FOURTH HOST!! THIS HAS PROCEEDED SINCE BEFORE GENESIS WAS WRITTEN...AND WILL CONTINUE UNTIL--

THE DAY OF ALPHA

ABOVE THE EARTH, IN FIXED ORBIT, THEIR CYCLOPEAN **SPACE HOME** HOVERS WITH SOMBER MAJESTY. INSIDE IT IS THE ONE ABOVE ALL. HIS WORD WILL SET THE TASK IN MOTION. IT WILL BE HIS WORD THAT WILL END IT...

HE SENDS DOWN HIS MESSAGE ON A LASER BEAM, TEN BILLION YEARS EVOLVED. SEEN ONCE **BEFORE** BY THE ANCIENT **EARTH**. IT WAS CALLED THE **LADDER OF FIRE!!**

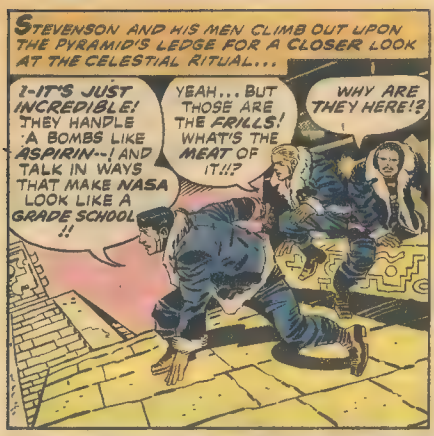
SEEN BY THE MODERNS, IT IS STILL A WONDROUS MATTER, CONSIDERING THE FLAMING, SNAPPING, EVER-CHANGING FORMS OF LIGHT WHICH MAKE THE HORIZON **RING** WITH SOUND --AND MEN FEEL THE PRESENCE OF THEIR OWN SOULS...

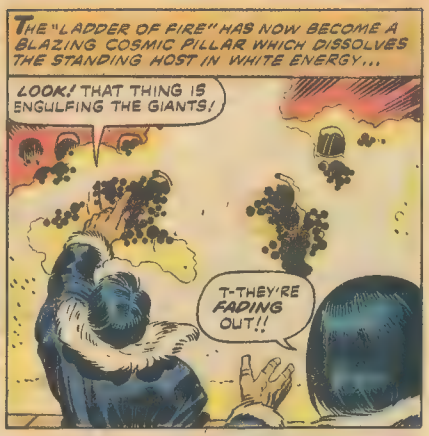
W-WHAT *IS* IT!!? I-I'VE NEVER SEEN OR HEARD ANYTHING *LIKE* IT!

THERE'S A *SPACESHIP* UP THERE, WE KNOW *THAT* --AND NO MORE!

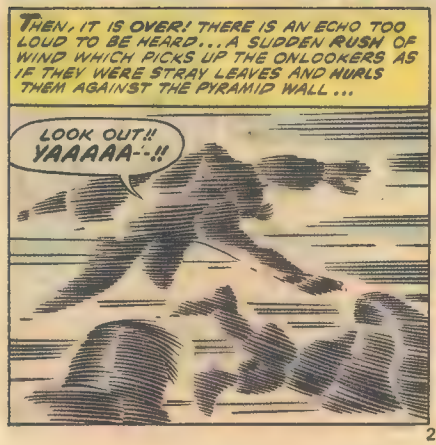
FEAR-STRICKEN HUMANS! IT'S NOTHING MORE THAN A CODED VOICE-- *DECODING ITSELF!*

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

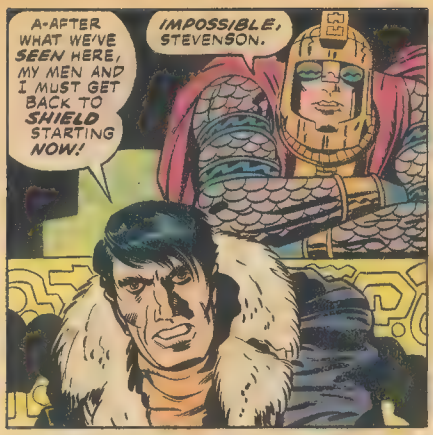

STEVENSON AND HIS MEN CLIMB OUT UPON THE PYRAMID'S LEDGE FOR A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CELESTIAL RITUAL...
I-IT'S JUST INCREDIBLE! THEY HANDLE A BOMBS LIKE ASPIRIN--! AND TALK IN WAYS THAT MAKE NASA LOOK LIKE A GRADE SCHOOL !!
YEAH... BUT THOSE ARE THE FRILLS! WHAT'S THE MEAT OF IT!!?
WHY ARE THEY HERE!?

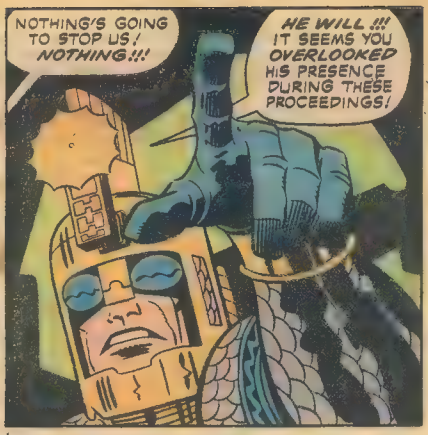

THE "LADDER OF FIRE" HAS NOW BECOME A BLAZING COSMIC PILLAR WHICH DISSOLVES THE STANDING HOST IN WHITE ENERGY...
LOOK! THAT THING IS ENGULFING THE GIANTS!
T-THEY'RE FADING OUT!!

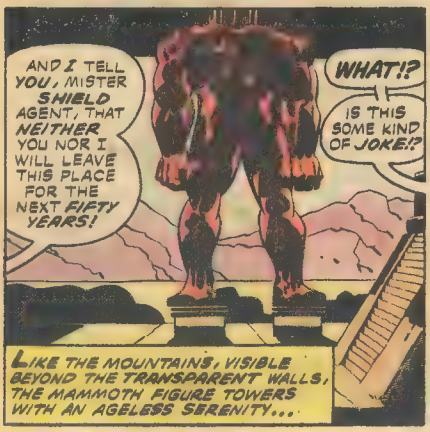
A MOMENT LATER, THE HOST HAS VANISHED! THEY HAVE ENTERED, AND ARE PART OF THE "WHEEL WITHIN A WHEEL." THEY HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED INTO THE BASIC FORM OF ALL MATTER!!
QUICK!! COVER YOUR EYES! T-THIS IS LIKE WATCHING TEN HYDROGEN BOMBS GOING OFF AT ONCE!

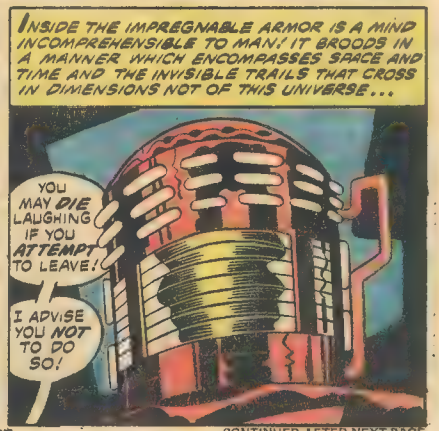

THEN, IT IS OVER! THERE IS AN ECHO TOO LOUD TO BE HEARD... A SUDDEN RUSH OF WIND WHICH PICKS UP THE ONLOOKERS AS IF THEY WERE STRAY LEAVES AND HURLS THEM AGAINST THE PYRAMID WALL...
LOOK OUT!! YAAAAA--!!

SILENCE... PAIN... AND SLOW RETURN TO A WORLD NOW FILLED WITH STRANGE PHENOMENA. STEVENSON IS FIRST TO GATHER HIS THOUGHTS...
W-WHAT WAS THAT THING? I-IT SWALLOWED THE GIANTS... AND NOW THEY'RE... GONE!!!
THEY HAVEN'T GONE! THEY'RE MERELY EVERYWHERE--! IN EVERY CORNER OF THE EARTH!
UGH--!

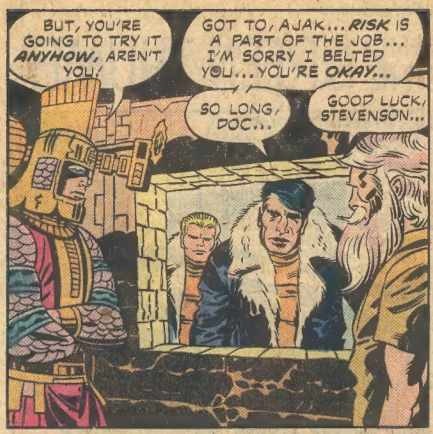




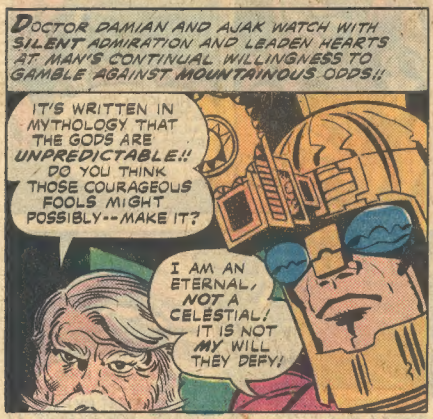




CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE


BUT, YOU'RE GOING TO TRY IT ANYHOW, AREN'T YOU!
GOT TO, AJAK... RISK IS A PART OF THE JOB... I'M SORRY I BELTED YOU... YOU'RE OKAY...
SO LONG, DOC...
GOOD LUCK, STEVENSON...

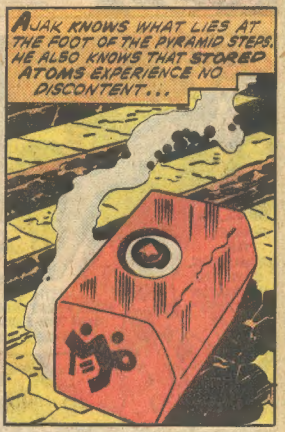
WARY OF THE IMMOBILE GIANT, THE SHIELD AGENTS RACE DOWN THE PYRAMID STEPS IN A BID FOR FREEDOM...
THIS IS IT, FELLAS! KEEP GOING! DON'T STOP UNTIL WE'RE IN THE CLEAR!
I'M HIP!


DOCTOR DAMIAN AND AJAK WATCH WITH SILENT ADMIRATION AND LEADEN HEARTS AT MAN'S CONTINUAL WILLINGNESS TO GAMBLE AGAINST MOUNTAINOUS ODDS!!
IT'S WRITTEN IN MYTHOLOGY THAT THE GODS ARE UNPREDICTABLE!! DO YOU THINK THOSE COURAGEOUS FOOLS MIGHT POSSIBLY--MAKE IT?
I AM AN ETERNAL, NOT A CELESTIAL! IT IS NOT MY WILL THEY DEFY!

THE ANSWER COMES SWIFTLY... IN A BLINDING, SEARING FLASH, FROM WHICH THE TWO RECOIL WITH INSTINCTIVE ACTION!
TTZZSHH!

AJAK!! W-WHAT WAS THAT!? Y-YOU DON'T THINK--
NO, I DON'T THINK THOSE MEN ARE DEAD! BUT I'M QUITE CERTAIN THAT THEY DIDN'T ESCAPE...

W-WHAT HAPPENED? W-WHAT WAS DONE TO THEM?
NOTHING THAT WASN'T DONE BEFORE... BE ASSURED, DOCTOR, OUR VISITORS WILL SPEND THEIR NEXT FIFTY YEARS IN RELATIVE CALM!


AJAK KNOWS WHAT LIES AT THE FOOT OF THE PYRAMID STEPS. HE ALSO KNOWS THAT STORED ATOMS EXPERIENCE NO DISCONTENT...

ARISHEM, THE MIGHTIEST OF THE FOURTH HOST, HAVING ENFORCED HIS WILL, RAISES HIS MAMMOTH ARM TOWARD THE SKY. IT SIGNALS THE BEGINNING OF THE FIFTY YEAR JUDGMENT -- THE FINAL STAGE OF AN EXPERIMENT CARRIED OUT BY THE CELESTIALS, AMONG THE COUNTLESS STARS, ON COUNTLESS WORLDS LIKE EARTH, IN THE FOND HOPE OF GENERATING WHAT THE CELESTIALS TERM AS ALPHA DAY!
BUT ENDLESS TIME HAS PRODUCED ENDLESS FAILURE! THUS, ARISHEM STANDS READY TO DO WHAT HE HAS ALWAYS DONE.
HE IS A PLANET-KILLER!!
ENGRAVED ON HIS THUMB IS THE FORMULA FOR WORLD DESTRUCTION!!
IF EARTH FAILS--
EARTH DIES!!
NEXT! DON'T MISS IT!!! MYSTERIES AND MONSTERS IN THE
CITY OF THE TOADS

ETERNAL UTTERINGS

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

From down the hall at 575 Madison Avenue comes a wheeze of maniacal laughter, the likes of which has not been heard since the late, great Curly Howard departed this vale of tears. And who is that chuckling maniac? Why, it's none other than Ralph Macchio, neo-editorial person of Marvel's frankly fabulous black-&-white magazines!

For those of you who tuned in late, Mr. Macchio sent a letter to ETERNALS in the days just before he came to work for the Mighty M. Said letter—whose subject was whether or not the Eternals' adventures should take place in the Marvel Universe—was printed in ETERNALS #3. Said letter has also resulted in a flood of mail which your very obedient armadillo is *still* wading through.

We'll get you for this, Ralph!

Greetings,

Somehow I just can't reconcile the existence of Eternals, Deviants, and Celestials alongside Kull, Conan, Galactus, the Kree, the Skrulls, and the Watchers.

I suggest that ETERNALS should take place on an alternate Earth like that of the Squadron Supreme. This would give Jack an entire universe of his own to play with—without any restrictions from the already established Marvel Universe.

Terry Riley
Route 1
Jane, MO 64846

Dear Marvel,

ETERNALS #3 was just marvelous! I must disagree with the readers who want to see the Eternals living on another Earth. In fact, I'm sick of hearing about so many parallel-Earths! Have the Eternals' stories take place on the regular Marvel-Earth! So what if there are already a lot of super-beings on that world!? There is still room for the Eternals—the planet isn't *that* small! After all, look how long the Inhumans remained hidden!

Wilson Rivera
89 Maujer St.
Brooklyn, NY 11206

Dear Marvel,

I'm casting my vote for the ETERNALS's world to be *outside* the Marvel Universe. To soften such a radical break with Marvel tradition, it could be established as one of the many dimensions tangent to the Marvel Universe. Marvel already has a dozen or so well-established alternate cosmos, from the Negative Zone to the Dark Dimension to the Squadron Supreme's Earth to Elric's Melnibone. In any case, it would be better all around if Jack Kirby didn't have to remain consistent with fifteen years of other people's creativity. Marvel's version of both Greek mythology and Earth's pre-history conflicts directly with the Eternals and Deviants and Space Gods. It would hurt both if either Kirby had to curtail his mythologizing, or the rest of the Marvel Universe had to warp itself around Kirby's mythos. Marvel has enough dimension-spanning characters to allow for guest-stars if anybody wants them, but personally I think THE ETERNALS would be more impressive and successful as a self-contained epic.

As for ETERNALS #4: I was impressed primarily by Sersi. I like her quite a bit better than Ikaris. She's got more character, and her cynical confidence in her own power is a welcome antidote to insipid Margo's bland hysteria. Also, "Sersi of the Olympic Mountains" has the honor of being the first Marvel character from the Pacific Northwest. As for your final blurb—you're right: I've seen Olympia, and I don't believe it either. Have the Eternals say hello to Governor Dan when they drop in. (Look at a map of Washington State if you don't know what I'm talking about.)

Jana C. Hollingsworth
1415 East Second St.
Port Angeles, WA 98362

Dear Jack, John, and Bullpen:

I am not too fond of all the alternate worlds currently appearing. It's a bit messy for continuity. I am also eager for the team-ups between Ikaris and such characters as Thor, the Silver Surfer, and the Fantastic Four. However, I do firmly agree that the work Jack has done already comes into some conflict with a lot of the things that have been happening on earth. So, I add my voice to those who wish to separate this series from the Marvel Universe. (But, of course, you could do some dimension-hopping to give us an occasional team-up!)

Larry Twiss
227 Fox Run
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Dear Jack,

I disagree! I disagree entirely with Ralph Macchio!

The Marveriter
Box 4112 S.R.A.
Anchorage, AK 99502

Dear Jack,

I'm against Ralph Macchio's idea of putting Ikaris and company on a parallel world or some such. To me, that smacks too much of what DC did with their characters—and to read their stories, you can *really* get confused. Puh-lease! While it would be tempting to have the stories set where you could make the rules, it detracts from the saga if the thing is happening in some other space/time continuum.

Bryan Hollerback
Route 2, Box 143
St. Genevieve, MO 63670

Dear Jack,

Like Ralph Macchio, I am not interested in seeing any cross-overs or team-ups spawned from the ETERNALS cast. Yet, perhaps events are already more intertwined than most of us could suspect. Jack is presently developing plot lines that he merely gave us peeks at years ago. F'rinstance, who was that familiar-looking, gray-haired, bearded Doctor who first found the clue to the installation that housed the Kree Sentry (back in FF #64)?

Then recall that the Kree employed *genetic tampering* themselves in the creation of yet another species homologous to man—the Inhumans!

Dan Claes
3009-12th Avenue
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404

Hmmm! That's very interesting, Dan! And it's a revelation that has sent a number of armadillos scurrying to their back issues!

And as for Terry, Jana, and all the rest of you who might have preferred a parallel existence for our cosmic cast...well, as you now know, the Eternals *et al* are definitely on good ol' Marvel-Earth. As a matter of fact, when you least expect it, we'll be....no, let's keep *that* a secret! Just be here in thirty days for the sake of the you-know-whos!

scanned by *Wizard*